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THE NEED FOR AREA VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS IN MICHIGAN, A PART OF THE MICHIGAN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION EVALUATION PROJECT.

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AS PART OF A 3-YEAR STUDY OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN MICHIGAN, 10 PROBLEMS WERE ARRANGED IN RANK ORDER OF IMPORTANCE BY AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE. ONE PROBLEM WAS "TO DETERMINE THE NEED FOR AND FEASIBILITY OF AREA VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS IN MICHIGAN." THIS REPORT REPRESENTS A REVIEW OF LITERATURE RELATED TO THIS PROBLEM. INCLUDED ARE A DEFINITION OF TERMS, THE HISTORY OF AREA VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SCHOOLS IN MICHIGAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION, EXAMPLES OF AREA VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN MICHIGAN, AND A DISCUSSION OF AREA VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN RELATION TO THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYMENT-BOUND YOUTH IN OUR HIGH SCHOOLS. IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT MOST HIGH SCHOOLS IN MICHIGAN ARE TOO SMALL TO PROVIDE A DIVERSIFIED PROGRAM OF SPECIALIZED TRAINING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYMENT-BOUND YOUTH. ASSUMING THAT A HIGH SCHOOL WOULD NEED AT LEAST 1,000 STUDENTS TO PROVIDE A VARIETY OF OFFERINGS TO MEET THE SPECIALIZED NEEDS OF EMPLOYMENT-BOUND YOUTH, FEWER THAN 20 PERCENT OF THE HIGH SCHOOLS IN MICHIGAN COULD QUALIFY. IT WAS RECOMMENDED THAT FURTHER STUDY BE GIVEN TO THE AREA CONCEPT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH AND ADULTS. (PS)

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The Need for Area Vocational Schools in Michigan

RALPH C. WENRICH

A PART OF THE MICHIGAN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION EVALUATION PROJECT

Sponsored by:

State Board of Control for Vocational Education
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THE NEED FOR AREA VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS IN MICHIGAN

Ralph C. Wenrich

ORA Project 04114

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FOREWORD

In the fall of 1958 the State Board of Control for Vocational Education authorized a three-year study and evaluation of vocational education in Michigan. In June 1960 The University of Michigan was requested by the Executive Committee (see Appendix B for list of members) to take the responsibility for that portion of the Michigan Vocational Education Evaluation Project having to do with organization, administration, and supervision of vocational education in Michigan.

In September 1960 Willard C. Olson, Dean of the University of Michigan's School of Education, appointed an advisory committee (see Appendix B for list of members) to assist with this phase of the project. The advisory committee held six meetings during the two years. At the first meeting the committee identified a list of problems having to do with organization, administration, and supervision of vocational education which they considered important and therefore deserving of study. This list was later reduced to a list of ten problems arranged in rank order of importance.

Problem No. 5 was "to determine the need for and feasibility of area vocational schools in Michigan". With the limited time and resources available, it was possible for the staff to do little more than review some of the literature related to the subject.

The advisory committee has reviewed the data reported and the conclusions and recommendations drawn from these facts. At the advisory committee meeting on May 2, 1962 the report was approved and the recommendations supported.

This report represents the outcome of one study done as a part of the overall Michigan Vocational Education Evaluation Project; additional review and discussion by the Executive Committee for the Project are required before the report is finally approved.

Ralph C. Wenrich
Project Director

PART I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION RELATING TO THE NEED FOR AREA VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The goals of modern education have expanded far beyond the simple ideas of a century ago--or even those of fifty years ago. In a recent yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators titled The High School in A Changing World, the goals of the modern high school are stated as "the maximum development of all the mental, moral, emotional, and physical powers of the individual, to the end that he may enjoy a rich life through the utilization of worthy and desirable personal goals, and the maximum development of the ability and desire of each individual to make the greatest possible contribution to all humanity through responsible participation in, and benefit from the great privileges of American citizenship."[1] Such goals call for more and more special facilities. Although high schools have tended to increase in size, there are still many schools too small to provide the necessary educational services for the people of the community. This is particularly true now that more and more adults feel the need for continued educational services of all kinds, some of which are clearly the responsibility of the public schools.

Fuller realization of this fact may account for the recent interest in and action toward school reorganization; the one-room little red schoolhouse is rapidly disappearing from the scene. The small high school may disappear too, because it cannot provide the diversified programs, the special laboratory and workshop facilities, the teaching aids, guidance services, and specialized teachers now demanded by modern education. The problem is clearly stated in an American Vocational Association bulletin titled "Area Vocational Education Programs:"

> "Vocational education in particular suffers when it is not adequately supported with sufficient funds to build modern shops and classrooms as well as to buy up-to-date equipment and supplies. Furthermore, in a restricted community there are not enough potential students to offer a variety of courses of study and to warrant specialized teachers, supervisory personnel, counseling services, or vocationally-trained administrators."[2]

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1. The High School in A Changing World. American Association of School Administrators. Washington, D. C.: the Association, 1958. p. 28.

2. "Area Vocational Education Programs." Research and Publications Committee, American Vocational Association, Inc. Washington, D. C.: the Association, 1959. p. 5.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Although the problem as stated by the Advisory Committee used the phrase "area vocational schools" it might be useful to think first in terms of area vocational programs. The term is defined in "Area Vocational Education Programs" as follows:

> "The term, area vocational education program, means a program consisting of one or more less-than-college-grade courses conducted under public supervision and control on an organized, systematic class basis, which is designed to fit individuals for useful employment in recognized occupations, and which is made available to residents of the state or an area thereof designated and approved by the state board for vocational education, who either have completed junior high school or, regardless of their school credits, are at least sixteen years of age and can reasonably be expected to profit by the instruction offered."

This definition is too limited; such phrases as "less-than-college-grade courses" and "designated and approved by the state board for vocational education" and "sixteen years of age" imply that all area programs will operate under the provisions of the federal vocational education acts and with the aid of funds appropriated through these acts. An area vocational program need not be limited to courses of less-than-college grade; neither is it necessary for an area to be designated and approved by the state board for vocational education; and the board of education in control of the area school can set the policies regarding minimum age of students.

For our purposes, an area vocational program will be considered one in which training is provided which leads to employment in specific occupations or advancement in a particular occupation, and which serves youth and adults of more than a single community or local school district who have a need for and can profit from such training.

Area vocational programs can be organized and operated on many different bases: (1) state controlled and financed vocational schools situated in those regions or areas of the state where they are most needed; (2) county schools controlled and financed jointly with the state; (3) county schools controlled by the county with financial assistance from the state; (4) a separate school for occupational training built and maintained cooperatively by two or more existing school districts; (5) expansion of the area served by a vocational school of a particular school district to include non-resident students in the area; or (6) a decentralized program which makes provision for exchanging students among schools that provide different kinds of vocational training in the area.

Since the term "vocational" has certain connotations which may handicap programs of this kind, it might be better to call these programs "area occupational training programs." The latter term implies that there is, for purposes of occupational training, a school or separate administrative unit designed to serve youth and adults of a given area. However, neither a school nor a separate administrative unit is necessary in order to have an area program. The term "area occupational training (vocational) program" will be used when we are discussing offerings designed to prepare people for employment, and the term "area occupational training (vocational) school" will be used when such offerings are provided in a separate administrative unit.

THE HISTORY OF AREA VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SCHOOLS IN MICHIGAN

The Michigan Council for Vocational Education Administration made a proposal in 1944 for a system of area vocational-technical schools in Michigan.[1] The Council was made up of two superintendents from each of the then eight MEA regions. Superintendents on the Council at the time of this report were Warren Bow, Detroit; Arthur G. Erickson, Ecorse; T. B. Poole, Deckerville; Russell LeCronier, Bad Axe; B. L. Davis, Hillsdale; W. L. Berkhof, Tecumseh; Earl H. Babcock, Grand Haven, Chairman; W. W. Gumser, Lowell; H. C. Spitler, Petoskey; W. E. Baker, Mesick; Howard D. Crull, Port Huron; Robert H. Gorsline, Milford; Frank C. Sweeney, Kingsford; John A. Lemmer, Escanaba; Harley H. Holmes, Marshall; and Sidney C. Mitchell, Benton Harbor. George H. Fern was an ex-officio member of the Council and State Director of Vocational Education in Michigan.

The Council's proposal defined an area vocational-technical school as a school with a geographical service area larger than the city or town area, the service area to be determined by the needs for training in the area, the ease of transporting students to and from the area school, or the ease with which students could be housed and boarded at such a school in cases where transportation is not feasible. The report went on to say:

> "The service area may comprise several cities or towns, be county-wide, include several counties, or the entire state. An area vocational-technical school may in some cases involve a service area smaller in size for some training fields than for others. For example, an area school may be basically set up to serve three counties in several training fields, and at the same time, serve the entire state in other training fields."

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1. Area Vocational-Technical Schools in Michigan. Second Report of the Michigan Council for Vocational Education Administration. Lansing, 1944.

The plan was for the State Board of Control for Vocational Education to designate existing city or community schools or colleges as area vocational-technical schools for specific vocational courses or subjects. The State Board of Control for Vocational Education would also designate the geographic areas to be served by course or subject, and the State Board was to reimburse the area vocational-technical school for administration, operation, maintenance, staff salaries, and transportation of eligible students. The plan prescribed free tuition and transportation for all students under the age of twenty-one. It should be noted that buildings, sites, and facilities other than equipment were to be provided by the local and geographical service area operating the school, whereas the equipment was to be provided through state and federal funds. This equipment was to be maintained by the local service area but held under the ownership of the State Board of Control for Vocational Education, which could at its discretion transfer the equipment to an area of greater need.

The plan was not well received by some, especially those who felt that the development of area schools would interfere with the development of the community-school concept which was popular at that time. Dr. Eugene B. Elliott, then Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction, was a proponent of community schools under local control, and publicly criticized the area vocational-technical school plan on the grounds that it would establish a duplicate and rival system of public education and would change the one-hundred-year tradition of complete educational authority centered in the local school system. In an article which appeared in the April 1945 issue of The Nation's Schools, titled "Disadvantages of Area Vocational Schools," Elliott stated that:

> "The development of community school districts, with their urban core and their surrounding natural market area, is undeniably a better solution to the problem than is the creation of rival school systems."

PART II. AREA VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

U. S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION RECOMMENDS AREA CONCEPT

In a recent report from the U. S. Office of Education titled Vocational Education in the Next Decade - Proposals for Discussion, a section is devoted to "Vocational Education on an Area Basis".[1] This statement gives such a clear explanation of the area concept, the need for area programs, and recommendations for the further development of area programs that it is reproduced in toto (See Appendix A).

According to the U. S. Office report, "There is a growing conviction that the interests and training needs of the greatest number of persons can be best met through a rapid and systematic development of area vocational schools and programs which would serve two or more school districts." Some of the current vocational education programs are being operated in large comprehensive high schools and separate vocational and technical schools. Other programs, however, are being operated in high schools with small enrollments, where the number of vocational offerings is necessarily limited. It must be recognized that in the existing vocational education facilities, only a fraction of the total number of new workers and of workers who require additional education can be trained.

Those who hold the point of view that all qualified persons should have an equal opportunity to get vocational preparation in the field of their choice, regardless of the geographical location in which they reside, consider the area concept an excellent way to accomplish this. Area schools can provide a wide range of programs, and therefore a wide range of training choices is available to students.

Another advantage of the area concept is that training can be provided for high school youth, for post-high school youth and for adults. Because of the wide range of program offerings and the up-to-date equipment and facilities provided for these programs, the area program should be able to satisfy the specialized training needs of most persons within the area it serves.

The U. S. Office report lists many advantages for the area vocational school. "It provides for a broad tax base distributed over large segments of population; it offers training opportunities to greater numbers of persons than is possible in smaller schools serving individual communities; it makes possible a broader administrative

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1. Vocational Education in the Next Decade - Proposals for Discussion. Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. 1961. Pp. 69-73.

base and more comprehensive auxiliary services; it makes available a greater range of curriculum offerings, and therefore a greater range of occupational training choices for residents in the area; it avoids duplication of equipment, services, and costs such as might prevail if a number of neighboring communities chose to offer similar training programs, and it provides a flexibility in operation that makes it possible to make rapid program adjustments and to meet emergency training needs quickly."

EXAMPLES OF AREA VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN MICHIGAN

Although the measures proposed by the Michigan Council for Vocational Education Administration were not put into operation, area vocational programs have developed in Michigan and are still developing. Examples of such programs are:

1. Ferris Institute, where a strong vocational-technical program has been developed which serves the whole state. This Institute is under the control of a state board and is financed by the state.

2. Vocational-technical divisions in Michigan colleges and universities, such as the Vocational-Industrial and Technical Education Department at Western Michigan University, which serves primarily the southwestern region of Michigan; and the vocational-technical program at Northern Michigan College, which serves the Upper Peninsula.

3. Community colleges in which vocational-technical divisions have been organized and to which non-resident students are admitted, although the colleges are operated by local school districts.

4. A cooperative arrangement in which four school districts in the St. Clair River Area pooled their resources and combined their efforts to provide an area program. A description of this program can be found in The Nation's Schools for May 1949. This program is still in operation, now involving three districts - East China Township (St. Clair and Marine City), Algonac, and Marysville.

DEVELOPMENT OF AREA VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN OTHER STATES

Many states have had area schools and/or programs for a long time. New Jersey has county vocational schools, and Connecticut and Massachusetts have systems of state-operated vocational and technical schools strategically located so as to serve all areas

of these two states. More recently the area concept has been implemented by the development of area schools in North Carolina, Oregon, West Virginia, Georgia, Florida, and Pennsylvania. California has community colleges which serve many of the functions of area vocational schools. Ohio and Illinois have engaged in extensive studies and have made reports recommending the establishment of area schools.

An interesting development is taking place in several states: vocational training centers are being organized on an area basis, and students in the area may go to these centers for their specialized training only, retaining their membership in the local community high school. In Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for example, students from seven high schools in the southern part of the county may attend the Bucks County Technical School every other week for specialized education in any one of 15 vocational fields. During alternate weeks they attend their community high schools, where they receive their general education. The plan proposed for the state of Illinois is similar to the Bucks County plan except that high school students would attend the vocational centers for two days each week.

AREA VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN RELATION TO THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYMENT-BOUND YOUTH IN OUR HIGH SCHOOLS

Since area vocational schools or programs would be expected to serve the needs of youth of high school age and older youth who have not completed high school (as well as adults), the question arises, "Would the needs of employment-bound youth in our high schools be better served through these schools or programs?" Parenthetically, it should be noted that the author was invited to discuss this question with the Michigan Council for Vocational Education Administration at their meeting in Grand Rapids on January 9, 1962.

There is some evidence that general and (so-called) comprehensive high schools are not generally meeting the needs of employment-bound youth. American high schools are traditionally college-preparatory institutions, and this is still their predominate function. Walter B. Cocking, in an editorial titled "Whither Secondary Education?" in the School Executive, March 1956, listed what he called well-known facts about America's secondary schools:

> "The original major function of the secondary schools was preparation for college; today it seems to have many functions. Formerly, secondary schools were found in only a few communities; today every community has at least one. Today more youth finish their secondary education than completed grammar school one hundred years ago. Society has placed increasing demands upon the secondary school which have resulted in a greatly broadened program. Yet the traditional concept of the secondary school remains a roadblock which hampers thinking and planning related to what the secondary school should do and be."

Dr. Cocking went on to record what he considered to be some of the major shortcomings of our secondary schools, among which were the following:

> "Teachers who are specialists primarily in subject matter and know little about the nature and characteristics of youth and their environment; the tendency to accept the organization and structure of the school as fixed and unchangeable....; the attempt to teach youth in almost absolute isolation from the world he lives in (ivory-towerism); the almost exclusive dependence upon 'the textbook' as the sole source of learning; and the acceptance of 'preparation for college' as the major guide in determining the program."

Here and there, says Cocking, some secondary schools are striving to overcome these obstacles and are getting good results, "but, by and large, the great majority are following a set pattern in which there is little evidence that anyone believes the secondary school to be an important agency in assisting youths with their needs and problems."

Oscar Handlin, in an article titled "Live Students and Dead Education,"[1] takes the position that we must reconsider the function and structure of secondary education:

> "The high school cannot meet the challenge of the oncoming tide of new students simply by increasing its existing facilities. The high school was an institution developed for a rather select student body, and this much larger aggregate will not fit into its established forms.....The secondary school must adjust to meet the needs of all these young people. In the 1960's either it will prepare, or it will fail to prepare them for citizenship and for careers. The high school must now become something more than the bridge between the elementary school and the college, a function which hitherto shaped its development."

The idea that most of our high schools are "comprehensive" is a myth, if we use Conant's definition[2], which is,

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1. The Atlantic, September 1961, Vol. 208, No. 3. P. 29, 30.

2. James B. Conant. The American High School Today. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959. P. 17.

> "The three main objectives of a comprehensive high school are: first, to provide a general education for all the future citizens; second, to provide good elective programs for those who wish to use their acquired skills immediately on graduation; third, to provide satisfactory programs for those whose vocations will depend on their subsequent education in a college or university."

The enthusiasm about the concept of a comprehensive high school is understandable, because it is an intriguing idea and an ideal toward which we might well work. But simply to call a school comprehensive does not make it so and such statements as this one can be misleading:

> "The development of the truly comprehensive high school is thus at once one of the great achievements and one of the great challenges of American public education."[1]

One could hardly disagree that the truly comprehensive high school is one of our great challenges, but that it is one of our great achievements is open to question. Franklin J. Keller's country-wide study of the expanding effort of high schools to serve the varying interests and educational needs of all students, as reported in his book, The Comprehensive High School, indicates that he saw very few schools which were truly comprehensive. As a result of his visits to more than 70 schools identified as most nearly meeting the ideals of comprehensive high schools, Dr. Keller came to the conclusion that the comprehensive high school is "what a school administrator has, or thinks he has, or what he would like people to think he has."

In 1956, Professors Anderson and Wenrich of The University of Michigan's School of Education did a survey of the principals of the 270 secondary schools in Michigan accredited by the North Central Association. The object of the survey was to determine the principals' conception of how comprehensive their schools were. Of the 270 principals, 198 responded: 12 said that their schools were "truly comprehensive;" 94 said "quite comprehensive;" 69 said "fairly comprehensive;" 17, "somewhat comprehensive;" and 2, "not at all comprehensive." Four did not answer this question. It is interesting to note that more than 88 percent of the principals thought their schools were "fairly," "quite," or "truly" comprehensive; only 10 percent thought that their schools were "somewhat" or "not at all" comprehensive. The question was then asked, "In addition to a program of general education, in which of the following specialized fields may a student (in your school) participate?" The responses were:

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1. Will French; J. Dan Hull; and E. L. Dodds. American High School Administration. New York: Rinehart and Company, 1957, Revised. P. 92.

college preparatory, 196; vocational business, 177; vocational industrial, 114; vocational agriculture, 176; vocational homemaking, 139; cooperative occupational training, 178. These responses indicate that the term "vocational" was either misinterpreted or interpreted loosely by the principals. Space was provided under this question for write-in's under the heading "Others." The principal who wrote in this space, "One general course for all students" was certainly not referring to a vocational offering. Others who wrote in "art and music," "arts and crafts - music," "music and drama," "art," or "general," either misunderstood the question or wished to make a case for a more comprehensive high school than they really had. The most encouraging part of this survey was in answer to the question, "Would you think your school should be more comprehensive?" One hundred twenty five said "Yes." The principals were then invited to state how their schools could be made more comprehensive, and their responses furnished abundant evidence of the desire of school administrators to strengthen their general education offerings as well as to provide more adequate specialized programs for vocational education. Their inability to provide the kind of program they feel is needed is also obvious; obstacles which stand in the way are inadequate facilities, insufficient finances, inability to employ enough qualified teachers, and a host of secondary reasons. A reason which the principals did not give but which may be extremely important is the fact that high schools traditionally have been college-preparatory institutions and their faculties, being college oriented, are not interested in changing the schools' character in order to serve employment-bound youth more effectively.

The offerings of most high schools aimed at preparing youth for employment, especially employment in industry and the service occupations, are extremely meager. General education courses are frequently offered as a substitute for the specialized courses which are really needed to prepare youth for employment. It should be clearly recognized by all, but especially by school administrators, that the practical arts courses -- industrial arts, general business, general homemaking, and general agriculture -- are not intended to prepare youth for employment. They are a part of the general education program intended to serve needs common to all youth. To present an industrial arts course as preparation for employment is to deceive both the learner and his future employer.

Most high schools are too small to provide the diversity of specialized courses required to prepare youth for employment. In fact, Conant considers the number one problem to be "the elimination of the small high school." He points out that in order to be comprehensive, a school should have a graduating class of at least 100 students. This means that a three-year high school would have to have an enrollment of approximately 450-500, and that a four-year high school would have to be considerably larger. In Michigan, in 1960-61, there were 520 public accredited high schools. Sixty of these had an enrollment of less than 200; 229 had an enrollment of 200-499; 135 had

from 500 to 999 students; and 96 schools had over 1000 enrolled. In other words, by Conant's modest definition, nearly 60 percent of the public high schools in Michigan are too small to be comprehensive. Many educators would go even further than Conant, and would say that a high school must be considerably larger to justify a diversified program.

The argument is sometimes heard that we need to devote more of our energies to the reorganization and consolidation of school districts; the assumption is that this would result in larger administrative units for purposes of secondary education. In 1945 we had in Michigan 6,029 school districts and 539 high schools operating a program through the twelfth grade. By the end of 1961 we had reduced the number of school districts to 1,874, but the number of high schools stood at 535, only 4 less than in 1945.

In a democratic society, all youth need to be educated to the extent of their abilities and in line with their interests. There are many leaders who would not concern themselves seriously about youth who are academically less able, but other leaders are concerned:

1. In The American High School Today, Conant's seventh recommendation is "diversified programs for the development of marketable skills."

2. In Slums and Suburbs, Conant says:

   "I submit that in a heavily urbanized and industrialized free society, the educational experiences of youth should fit their subsequent employment. There should be a smooth transition from full-time schooling to a full-time job, whether that transition be after grade ten or after graduation from high school, college or university."

3. John W. Gardner, in his 1960 Annual Report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, includes a section on the subject, "From High School to Job," where he makes a case for the fact that the schools must concern themselves with youth of all levels and all kinds of abilities, not just with those who are academically outstanding.

Then too, it is in the best interest of our nation to develop everyone to his maximum capacity. The maximum development and full utilization of our manpower is essential to our social and economic well-being. It may even be a condition of survival.

PART III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

CONCLUSION

American secondary schools were organized for, and have been dominated by, a single function: to provide a bridge between the elementary school and the college. The function of providing a bridge from school to job has been "tacked on." Because of this, we have staffed our high schools with teachers who are subject-matter specialists, primarily interested in the preparation of youth for college. These academically oriented faculties have found it easier and more natural to relate themselves and the educational programs they offer to colleges and universities rather than to groups of employees and employers in the community.

Most high schools in Michigan are too small to provide a diversified program of specialized training to meet the needs of employment-bound youth. Assuming a high school would need at least 1000 students to provide a variety of offerings to meet the specialized needs and interests of employment-bound youth, less than 20 percent of the high schools in Michigan could qualify. The plan used in several states, of vocational centers to which students go on a part-time basis for their specialized education, seems to have some merit. Under this plan boys and girls retain their membership in the local community high schools; take their general education with other students, including the college-bound youth; engage in social and athletic activities with other youth; and graduate from the local high school.

Vocational schools or centers would also provide better facilities and staff for the pre-service and in-service training of out-of-school youth and adults.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that further study be given to the area concept for purposes of vocational education for high school youth and adults. A thorough study should be made of area schools and/or programs in other states, including the size of the areas, plan of organization, methods of financing, etc.

APPENDIX A

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ON AN AREA BASIS

(from Vocational Education in the Next Decade. Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1961. Pp. 69-73.)

IDENTIFICATION OF NEED FOR AREA PROGRAMS

A great number of vocational education programs are operated in high schools with small school enrollments thus limiting the number of vocational offerings. Other programs are in large comprehensive high schools, separate vocational and technical schools, and community colleges. Some are offered in State, county or area vocational schools, technical institutes, and junior colleges which provide for the training needs of a number of communities and reasonably large segments of the population surrounding the centers. The many patterns have served a useful purpose. However, there is a growing conviction that the interests and training needs of the greatest number of persons can best be met through a rapid and systematic development of area vocational schools and programs which would serve two or more school districts.

It must be recognized that only a fraction of the total number of new workers and workers who require additional education can be trained in existing vocational education facilities. Furthermore, it must be recognized that only a comparatively small proportion of the youths and adults who are interested in, qualified for, and able to profit from vocational education have an opportunity to take advantage of such instruction because of the remoteness of training centers from their place of residence, inadequacy of the range of vocational offerings in certain schools, and other limiting factors.

THE AREA CONCEPT

The area concept in vocational education is based upon the philosophy that all qualified persons should have an equal opportunity to participate in vocational education programs of their choice regardless of the geographical location in which they reside. This concept is far reaching in its scope and significance. It encourages the principle of free or low cost education for all trainees residing in the geographical area served by the school program. In the interest of the national welfare, all students should have an opportunity to profit from training programs regardless of their economic status or that of the area where they reside.

Within each State, under the area concept, provision is made for vocational schools and programs that are reasonably accessible to residents in all parts of the State. It suggests the need for

broad and effective planning not only in terms of strategic school locations to meet present and future training needs but also in terms of broad administrative patterns and financial structures developed on as wide a support base as possible. In some cases it may be necessary to cut across or replace traditional organizational patterns in developing area programs.

Area schools make possible a wide range of program offerings and consequently many different training choices. Comprehensiveness is the hallmark of area schools. These can well serve as broad vocational service centers for practically all of the needed programs and activities related to distribution, trades and industries, practical nursing, technical occupations, office occupations, agriculture, home economics, and other fields not included in the provisions of the Federal vocational acts.

Area schools may well make available facilities to care for existing and changing training needs. However, area vocational education programs can be housed in many types of training centers. Probably the most favored type is an extensive vocational education school with the buildings, facilities and offerings specifically designed to meet the particular training needs of the area. Area programs housed in an identifiable department within a community college, or regional high school, may serve area purposes and functions if qualified leadership is provided for such departments, but there may be less program scope, flexibility and adaptability in institutions of this type.

Under the area concept training can be provided at either the high school or post-high school and adult levels but, post-high school and adult training is generally more popular in this type of school. Also envisioned is the inclusion of extention or supplementary training as a basic function and responsibility of every area school program.

The concept embodies the possibility of using regular or itinerant instructors employed to conduct short unit courses for special groups, at locations other than the main school center but within the geographical area served by the school when such special arrangements can be justified. Because of the wide range of program offerings and the extensive equipment and facilities provided for these programs, the area school should be able to satisfy the specific training needs of nearly all persons within the area.

With facilities of this type available and the flexibility of the program, area school centers should be able to provide needed training services not only of the types previously noted but also special programs to meet the training needs of the handicapped, the unemployed, the aging groups, the migrant, the office worker, and other special segments of the work force. When preparatory or part-time cooperative courses in fields such as distribution,

agriculture and homemaking are provided for secondary school students in community high schools within an area, area school facilities may also be provided to care for the preparatory program on a more advanced basis and extension course needs of adults in these fields. The area pattern also lends itself to many types of training approaches within an over-all framework of organization including part-time cooperative training; supervisory training; custodial and similar areas of public service training; management training; and other types that might be difficult to organize in smaller schools.

The area concept takes into consideration the mobility of the Nation's work force and recognizes State and national training needs as well as those that exist in a particular city, community or area. Although local needs identified through surveys and advisory committee studies may serve as a primary justification for initiating program offerings, a broader view which gives consideration to State and national manpower shortages must also be included in the justification.

The area vocational school offers many advantages. It provides for a broad tax base distributed over large segments of population; it offers training opportunities to greater numbers of persons than is possible in smaller schools serving individual communities; it makes possible a broader administrative base and more comprehensive auxiliary services; it makes available a greater range of curriculum offerings and therefore a greater range of occupational training choices for residents in the area; it avoids duplication of equipment services, and costs such as might prevail if a number of neighboring communities chose to offer similar training programs, and it provides for a flexibility in operation that makes it possible to make rapid program adjustments and to meet emergency training needs quickly.

When the area concept is fully implemented, it will provide for a complete network of training centers, available not only for the purpose of training to meet national manpower requirements in peacetime but also for the purpose of quickly adapting training facilities to needs and demands of national emergencies.

EFFORTS TO STIMULATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE AREA SCHOOLS

Leaders in vocational education, in recent years, have focused considerable attention on the promotion and development of the area concept. Congressional recognition of the soundness of the area vocational education approach in meeting national manpower needs was reflected in Title VIII of the National Defense Education Act of 1958. One major effect of this title has been the stimulation of efforts to provide area vocational schools designed to house several types of vocational education programs. It has also stimulated area programs to serve persons in a geographic area larger than the usual school unit.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AREA SCHOOL APPROACH

Area schools have proven their effectiveness wherever they have been established. Several of the advantages of the area pattern noted earlier in this section are the factors that contribute most decisively to effectiveness of the area organization. One of the most important of these factors is the availability of a large population group from which qualified students may be recruited for area school programs.

NEED FOR EXPANSION OF AREA PROGRAMS

The general need for a systematic increase in area programs to relieve local, State and national manpower shortages was treated in the opening paragraphs of this section. Schools of this nature designed to serve all types of vocational training services are needed and should be provided in every geographical area in the Nation where the training needs of the population are not being met adequately or not at all. The total number of such schools needed throughout the Nation and the types of programs, services and facilities that should be provided cannot be accurately estimated without extensive studies of training needs. However, it may be safely assumed that even if provisions could be made for several hundred additional area vocational programs within the next few years, the number would still fall short of the number needed to care for the Nation's training requirements.

Recommendations

1. Concurrently, studies should be initiated as rapidly as possible for the purpose of determining the nature and extent of the need for establishing area vocational programs and identifying the geographical locations where the need for such schools seems to be most acute.

2. Following such studies, a national conference of vocational educators and others who are concerned with the problem should be implemented to consider the results of the study and to formulate plans for the further development of area programs.

3. Vocational education should be further extended so it may serve effectively on an area basis. Funds should be made available immediately to assist in the stimulation of these programs and for school plants and other necessary expenses.

4. During the past four decades, programs of vocational education have been organized and operated by a variety of school administrative units. Many of the newer proposals will require administrative units larger than the usual school districts. Where effective programs require this, special legislation should be secured.

Implementing Action

Provide area vocational education programs to make available essential instruction needed by persons who have entered or are preparing to enter the work force of the Nation who do not have the opportunity to obtain the training they need.

APPENDIX B

Committees

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Winger, Robert M. - Assistant Superintendent for Vocational Education, Department of Public Instruction

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